

The Year I Found Myself under Two Blue Moons

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Colleen J. McElroy

THE YEAR I FOUND MYSELF UNDER TWO BLUE MOONS

*I like jam but not flim-flam
Com'on, baby, knock me a kiss*

Louis Jordan

Here is what the moon advised after clocks
Stopped keeping regular time and I stopped
Following lust like some checkered flag
Behind any old strong profile "Face up"
The moon said under a pluperfect
Time warp of *I had* / *I had not*—past implied

That mad moon knocked me back to first
Date days when I waited by silent telephones
For who-knows-what fool's call and everyone
I fucked was a mystery Might well have spent
The rest of my time fucking my life away

If it weren't for those who told
Me who to fuck and when
To fuck and where until
I said Fuck it and followed the life of a poet
Falling under the spell of dreamlight

Now blowing out sixty and still able
To shake my tambourine to the tune
Ohh, you sexy thing . . . (don't let them tell
you different: good black don't
crack and age ain't a number—
it's articulation of the spine)
And Baby, I've still got coins

Left in this bag unspent But might have thrown
Good money after bad when the Personals took
My fancy Fell in with a magician—some old
Flim-flam man so full of tricks I grew nervous
Watching the waiter trying to fill a water glass

Sure enough the stuff turned blue then red
“For your passion” Mr. Magic said and I knew
Everything I knew was up for grabs
Including cards he said would tell all and
I called for the check and moved on—found

Myself seduced by a man who told me I shouldn’t
Be afraid to let my flower bloom again
Wouldn’t listen when I explained how
Some odd forty years ago in an act committed
By prescription—my own—I had lost
My only flower to a neighbor’s older brother

Can’t remember his name But later there was one
Who reminded me of lovers who took women after
Me with glow-in-the-dark bodies
All the while trying to forget what it was
To hold sweet velvet curves and fall
Dappled in sequins of the moon’s blue light

In my life I’ve loved even those given names
More accurate than their own:
Mr. Spark Mr. No-chin and Ol’turtle-dick
The one with fingers too thick to hold
A tea cup (in vain I hoped
The rest of him would be as interesting)

Couldn’t keep Mr. Wonderful
In focus long enough to make him real
(found myself dreaming of the magician
How smoothly he pulled coins from my ear
Or told the future in the shape of a tear)

When Mr. Wonderful disappeared
(or I imagined him gone)
I began to see in water clear as moonlight
How I was moving toward a new century
Hormones no fucking wiser than before
And I left it at that

In this dream year of two blue moons
And triple nines practicing perfect zeroes
O like lips ready to be kissed